

and literally shouldered her incompetent suitor out of the way by brute force before coupling almost instantaneously with her. I wondered whether, being fairly worn, this male had had previous experience of mating.

Presumably similar little dramas happen frequently, but are seldom witnessed.—ROY LEVERTON, Whitewells, Ordiquhill, Cornhill, Banffshire AD45 2HS.

Separation of *Semiothisa notata* Linnaeus and *S. alternaria* Hübner, the Peacock and Sharp-angled Peacock moths (Lep.: Geometridae)

Previous authors state that the shape of the triangular sub-apical patch on the upperside of the forewings distinguish these species. Although this is usually reliable for specimens in good condition it is not always useful as a sole means of separation, particularly for worn individuals. Reference to the underside markings reveals additional characters which help identification and these are shown in the accompanying figure.

In *S. notata* the dark inter-nervural markings at the termen form elongated streaks which are broken only by the nervures themselves. In *S. alternaria* these markings are reduced to small dots except at the terminal indentation where they form bold blotches. Superficially these bold marks appear to be an extension of the dark wing fringes at this point, thus enhancing the sharply angulated apex characteristic of this species. Further, the forewing discal spots in *S. alternaria* are smaller but more clearly defined than those of *S. notata*.—ADRIAN M. RILEY, Dept. Entomology and Nematology, AFRC Inst. Arable Crops Research, Rothamsted Exp. Stn, Harpenden, Herts AL5 2JQ.

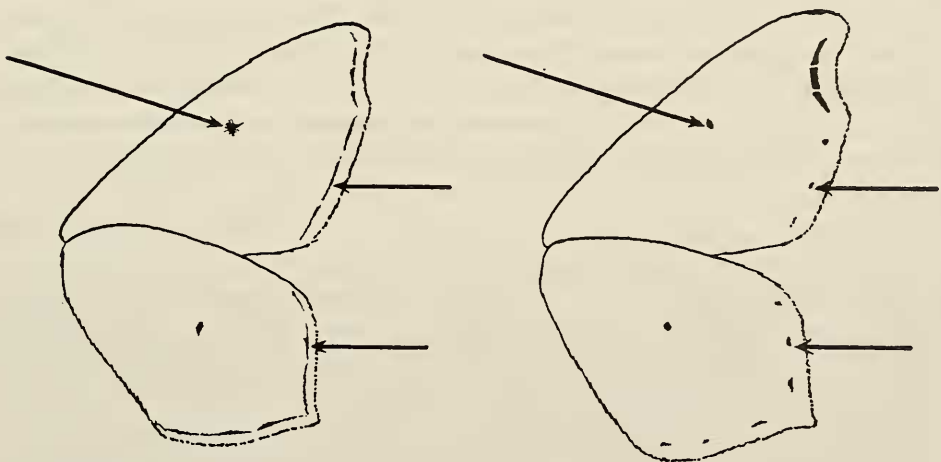


Fig. 1. *Semiothisa* spp.

S. notata L.

S. alternaria Hübn.